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Letter dated 29 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by Her Excellency Ms. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Argentine Republic, on 23 September 2008 in the General Assembly (see annex).

I should be most grateful if you could arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(Signed) John **Sawers**

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Annex to the letter dated 29 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the President of the Argentine Republic in the general debate on 23 September 2008

The British Government attaches great importance to the principle of self-determination as set out in Article 1.2 of the Charter of the United Nations and article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That principle underlies our position on the Falkland Islands.

The Falkland Islands are not a colonial enclave. Britain's overseas territories are British for as long as they want to remain British. The people of the Falkland Islands have chosen to retain their link with Britain. The democratically elected representatives of the Falkland Islands once again expressed their own views clearly when they visited the United Nations for this year's debate in the Committee of 24. They asked the Committee to recognize that they, like any other people, were entitled to exercise the right of self-determination. They reiterated that the people of the Falkland Islands did not wish for any change in the status of the Islands.

There can be no negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the islanders so wish.

The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.